





# FISHING NORTHWEST INDIANA'S LAKE MICHIGAN SHORELINE AND TRIBUTARIES

This packet is a summary of fishing opportunities along Northwest Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan and its tributaries. Fish species such as coho salmon, chinook salmon, steelhead trout, brown trout, lake trout, yellow perch, smallmouth bass and various sunfish all contribute to the catch. Fishing opportunities are available to all types of anglers--boat, shoreline and stream.

#### **HISTORY**

Lake Michigan is the third largest of the Great Lakes and the sixth largest lake in the world (Beeton 1984). It is the only Great Lake entirely within the United States, but because of fish movement between Lakes Michigan and Huron and its discharge to Huron, the lake is important internationally (Eshenroder, et. al. 1995). Lake Michigan, with a surface area of 57,750 km², is divided into:

- 1) a southern basin, relatively smooth in contour, with a maximum depth of 558ft., and
- 2) an irregularly shaped northern basin with a maximum depth of 922ft.

Native stocks of lake trout once comprised a great resource in Lake Michigan. However, predation by the parasitic sea lamprey, coupled with intense commercial fishing in the 1940s and 1950s nearly eliminated the lake trout. Sea lampreys, native to the Atlantic Ocean, entered the Great Lakes

system in the 1800s through manmade locks and shipping canals. The first observation of the lamprey occurred in Lake Ontario in the 1830's. Through the Welland Canal, a navigational canal connecting Lakes Ontario and Erie, sea lampreys moved into Lake Erie. After spreading throughout Erie, sea lampreys moved to the other Great Lakes, appearing in Lake Michigan in 1936 (Charlebois 1996). By the late 1940's, populations of sea lampreys exploded in all of the upper Great Lakes resulting in the drastic population decline of lake trout. With the Great Lakes top predator in decline, came the next invader, the alewife. Alewives, unintentionally introduced into Lake Michigan in 1949 from the Atlantic Ocean, depleted food sources for themselves and other native fishes. Their high numbers and ability to out-compete fish with similar diets led to depletions and local extinctions of native species. These disruptions in the native fish community and food web, coupled with habitat alterations and degradation, contributed to the decline of important commercial and sport fisheries.

Rehabilitation of the Lake Michigan fish community began in 1960 with the extension of the sea lamprey control program to Lake Michigan, plantings of lake trout and the introduction of coho salmon, chinook salmon, brown trout and steelhead trout. Lake trout planting began in 1965 and coho salmon and chinook salmon were introduced from the Pacific Northwest in 1966 and 1967 (Eshenroder et. al. 1995). Rainbow trout, or

steelhead and brown trout were also extensively planted. Of the five major salmonids stocked, only lake trout was released with the main objective being rehabilitation (i.e. to reestablish reproducing populations). The others were stocked to provide angling opportunities and to utilize the overabundance of nonnative alewives, which became a nuisance when vast numbers died and washed up on local beaches.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) has been stocking salmon and trout along northwest Indiana's shoreline since the late 1960's. The area stocked extends from Michigan City to Whiting, Indiana and includes sites along the St. Joseph River, Trail Creek and the East Branch of the Little Calumet River. The number of trout and salmon stocked in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan from 1982 to 2002 has averaged 1.2 million fish per year (see page 13 for Indiana stocking records).

Indiana was the first Great Lakes state to stock the skamania strain of summer migrating steelhead. The introduction of Pacific Northwest salmonids (coho, chinook, and steelhead) has since produced a more stable and productive fish community.

#### STOCKING SCHEDULE

The stocking schedule of trout and salmon in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan includes: chinook salmon stocked in early May, coho salmon in November, summer-run steelhead in late March and winter-run steelhead in December. The Pacific salmon and trout spend their adult lives in the Great Lakes in place of their native ocean. When they become sexually mature, they migrate to the stream or lake area where they were stocked in order to spawn. Chinook and coho die after spawning; steelhead may live to spawn in future years. The age of sexual maturity varies among species. Normally, a chinook matures at

2-4 years of age, coho at age 2-3, and steelhead at 3-5 years of age.

These species of Pacific trout and salmon make up the majority of the fish migrating/ returning to Trail Creek, Little Calumet River and Salt Creek.

#### **INTERAGENCY MANAGEMENT**

### Who manages the Great Lakes and Lake Michigan?

The interagency management of fishery resources in the Great Lakes was formalized in the 1980s when A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries (Great Lakes Fishery Commission 1980) was ratified by the heads of federal, state, provincial, and tribal resource agencies (known as the Committee of the Whole, COMW) concerned with these water bodies (Eshenroder et. al. 1995). The Joint Plan implemented a framework for cooperative fishery management under the aegis of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC). The Joint Plan established procedures for achieving a consensus approach among Great Lakes fisheries-management agencies. Fish communities in each lake must be managed as a whole. The Joint Plan ensures that each agency has a stake in the entire system and recognizes that the interactions among fish species is important in the overall management of the Lakes' fisheries.

Individual lake committees are responsible for implementing this consensus approach to fish community management. Lake committees are composed of a single representative from each management agency with jurisdiction on a Great Lake. The Lake Michigan (Lake) Committee (LMC) has representatives from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin along with the Chippewa-Ottawa Treaty Fishery

Management Authority. The Lake Michigan biologist stationed in Michigan City is Indiana's representative.

#### WHERE TO FISH

Indiana's share of Lake Michigan is the smallest of the four states bordering the Lake (approximately 1% of Lake Michigan area), encompassing approximately 43 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline [224 square miles]. Most of the area is highly developed and heavily industrialized, with the exception of the Dunes National Lakeshore and the Indiana Dunes State Park.

<u>Lake</u> There are various sites providing shoreline access and boat launching ramps along the Indiana shoreline of Lake Michigan (see the enclosed Indiana Shoreline map of Lake Michigan).

The Michigan City pier, basin, and adjoining ramp (owned by City of Michigan City), provide access for both shore and boat anglers. Another municipal ramp is located upstream on Trail Creek (Trail Creek Marina). In addition, a public fishing site for shoreline anglers exists adjacently to the Michigan City DNR building (handicap accessible).

A public fishing site for shoreline anglers (handicap accessible) is available at the Port of Indiana. Various private marinas along Burns Waterway (State Road 249; Burns Ditch) provide boat launching facilities.

Hammond, Lake County Parks and Recreation Whihala Beach County Park (Whiting) and East Chicago provide boat launching facilities in addition to access for shoreline anglers (all are handicap accessible).

{ \*\*All previously listed boat ramps from Michigan City west to Hammond charge a launch and/or entrance fee. All previously listed shore access sites, with the

exception of the DNR public access site and the Port of Indiana public access site, may charge a parking fee\*\*.}

Stream Trail Creek has six public fishing sites, only one is handicap accessible. These include the access site adjacent to the DNR building; Robert Peo Public Access (located on Liberty Trail); U.S. 35; Trail Creek Forks (U.S. 20); Johnson Road and Creek Ridge Park. Creek Ridge Park (located 5 miles east of U.S. 421 on County Road 400 in Michigan City) is a LaPorte County park that is handicap accessible (Northwest Indiana Steelheaders organization built a handicap-accessible ramp at this park).

The East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Salt Creek provide limited public access sites for fishing opportunities. Salt Creek runs through Imagination Glenn County Park and Haven Hollow Park, both offering angler access. There is one State-managed public fishing site located on Salt Creek, The Chustak Public Fishing Area. Portions of the East Branch of the Little Calumet River flow through the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore property, which the public can utilize.

Since the majority of the Northwest Indiana tributaries run through private property; **permission** from the landowner to fish is **required** on these private lands.

<u>Discharges</u> Limited access to warm-water discharges is provided by industrial plants located on the shoreline. Due to recent economic downturns and increased security, many areas have either been closed or public access is not being granted.

Mirant Company's State Line Power Plant (formerly known as State Line Generating Station, owned by Southern Energy Company), located on the Indiana/Illinois State Line, BP Oil Company (Amoco) in Whiting, and the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) generating station in Michigan City provide fishing opportunities for brown trout, coho, and steelhead in the winter/spring.

Yellow perch, bass and various trout/salmon can be found during the summer months. All discharges previously listed are <u>privately owned</u> and can close these sites at their discretion <u>at any time</u>, i.e., limiting access during adverse weather conditions due to dangers associated with high winds and/or icy conditions.

#### WINTER OPPORTUNITIES 1

During the months of January, February and March, fishing activity is limited to the streams and warmwater discharges along the shoreline. All the discharges originate from shoreline property owned by private industry. Three warmwater discharges are available to shore anglers for access.

Mirant Company operates State Line Generating Station, set on the Indiana-Illinois state line. This is open to the public on a limited daily basis for angling opportunities. It has been closed during times when the lake is too treacherous. It is located off 103rd Street in South Chicago, Illinois. BP Oil Company (formerly Amoco) allows day and night fishing at their discharge, located off of 119th Street in Whiting near Whiting Park. Lastly, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) Michigan City generating station, located just west of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Office (100 West Water Street; Michigan City), is open to angling from sunrise to sunset.

This type of warm-water discharge fishing produces good catches of brown trout, with steelhead, coho, and an occasional chinook also contributing. Drum, smallmouth bass, catfish and walleye can also be found at these discharges. Suggested equipment for fishing discharges in the winter includes (not limited to): proper insulated clothing for Northern Indiana's harsh winters; two-three rods for both casting and bait-fishing; 6-10 pound test line rated for fishing in sub-zero to 45 degree temperatures; long-handled net of 8-12 feet (most fishing areas by the discharges are much higher than the water). Best lures/baits include small alewives (frozen, 1½ to 2½ inches); nightcrawlers; spawn bags; small spoons (2/5 to 3/4 oz., such as little cleos; kowobblers). Body baits (rapalas-size 7 and 9) and spinners work on occasion. Suggested colors for prior listed lures: silver/green, chrome/green, chrome/orange, chartreuse w/red or black dots; fluorescent orange lures and so forth. Always take along a wide variety of lures/baits because the fish will show preferences on a daily basis.

#### **SPRING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### Coho Salmon

Boat-fishing season along the southern shoreline of Lake Michigan usually begins with the departure of ice around mid-February to April. Between March and mid-May, most of the fishing activity occurs within a two-mile band along the shoreline with coho salmon contributing close to 95% of the catch. Most coho salmon stocked in the lake by Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana will stage in southern Lake Michigan in the spring, due to annual migration patterns. The 3-year-old coho gains weight rapidly, weighing approximately 2 pounds in March and up to 5 pounds in May when they begin moving offshore. Steelhead,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Due to declining electricity demand and the economic downturn in steel and other industries, NIPSCOs Dean Mitchell plant in Gary has ceased operations indefinitely (i.e. no warmwater discharge or public access).

brown trout, chinook salmon, and some larger coho are also taken during this period.

Trolling with thin-fins, rapalas, thundersticks (and various other body-baits and spoons), spinners, or dodgers and flies are the fishing methods most frequently used by boat anglers. Casting into warmwater plumes in early spring when the lake temperature is still in the high 30's or low 40's has had some success. Suggested color combinations include blue/white; bright red w/black; solid chartreuse, solid hot pink, solid orange w/silver, chrome or gold.

Shore anglers have found the months of March (and as early as mid-February) through April to be the best for catching coho in the spring. They cast using the same types of artificials as the boat anglers or fish with bait (nightcrawlers, spawn, waxworms or squid, suspending bait off bottom or from 4-6 feet below the surface). Various piers provide fishing access along Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline.

#### **Rainbow Smelt**

Rainbow smelt may be taken by dip net or seine from March 1 through May 30 along Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan. The smelt run usually takes place beginning in April to the first half of May; however, the times of the runs are dependent upon environmental variables such as temperature. Peak catches usually occur in mid-April. Smelt are caught by using either dip nets or seines after dusk. Please refer to the Indiana Fishing Regulations Guide for specific requirements.

#### **Sunfish Family**

The sunfish family can be divided into three groups:

- 1) smallmouth and largemouth bass (black bass)
- 2) the crappies

3) the true sunfish and rock bass

In Lake Michigan, these fish inhabit mostly breakwaters and other areas that are protected from Lake wave action (marina basins). All are spring spawners, with spawning for some extending into the summer months.

#### **Smallmouth Bass**

Smallmouth bass, a nearshore species, are confined to reefs and shoal water areas. Prior to development of Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline, these nearshore waters were relatively shallow, with a consistent sand bottom. Shoreline development (i.e., rip-rap shoreline and structures) has resulted in the creation of suitable smallmouth bass habitat. Smallmouth bass numbers have responded positively to this increase in habitat. As the availability and abundance of smallmouth bass have increased in southern Lake Michigan, so has the interest by anglers targeting smallmouth. Wave energy has a direct influence on smallmouth distribution. Protected areas, such as the land side of breakwaters and inside marinas are areas that produce the best action. Angling methods for bass include bait casting and the use of common live baits (crawlers: minnows). Smallmouth are particularly vulnerable to fishing after dark.

**Panfish** (bluegill, rock bass, pumpkinseed)

These species are commonly found at all of the shore fishing sites, especially at the marinas (Hammond; Pastrick; Washington Park). Most are sedentary, remaining much of the time near submerged cover or hovering quietly in the shade of an overhanging object. Insects, crustaceans, and small fish are the most important food sources. Feeding occurs at the surface, as well as on the bottom. When fishing for these species, pay particular

attention to the marina fishing rules and regulations. Most marinas do not allow fishing inside the marina itself, unless a special area has been opened to marina fishing.

#### **Rock Bass**

This fish favors clear, cool to warm waters over a rocky/gravel bottom with some vegetation. They are also found at most of the marina shore access sites, near breakwaters/stone-armored shorelines. Rock bass utilize a variety of foods, including crayfish, small fish and insects. Adults feed mostly in the evening and morning hours.

#### **SUMMER**

#### **Trout and Salmon**

The water temperature close to shore increases rapidly in late spring, driving coho and most other salmonids into the deep, colder offshore waters. Between May and the end of July, boat anglers in pursuit of trout and salmon normally fish at depths ranging between 70 and 200 feet of water. This entails traveling a distance of 6-to-20 miles from shore, depending upon the point of departure (these water depths require traveling offshore to Illinois or Michigan waters. If fishing IL or MI waters, a fishing license from the appropriate state is also necessary). Downriggers are used to get the lure down to the temperature zone sought by trout and salmon. Lake trout, coho, chinook, steelhead, and to a lesser extent, brown trout, all contribute to the catch.

#### **Yellow Perch**

Yellow perch move closer to the shoreline during these months and are available on a limited basis to shore and boat anglers. Minnows, crayfish tails, frozen shrimp and crab fished at depths less than forty feet July through September have produced the best catches. Shore fishing opportunities also exist

throughout the summer months at most of the shoreline fishing sites.

#### Skamania Steelhead

By mid to late June, depending on water temperatures and water levels in the tributaries, the summer-run skamania will return to Indiana's tributaries where they were planted as fingerlings. The two tributaries the Division of Fish and Wildlife stocks include: The East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Trail Creek.

Most skamania will "stage" in Lake Michigan, with fish rushing upstream-especially after a heavy rainfall to begin the "run". By mid-August (dependent upon tributary temperatures and water levels), good numbers of skamania have entered their home tributary streams; however, skamania will continue to enter the area tributaries throughout the fall and winter months (through March). Skamania spawning activities begin around mid-February through March. The spent steelhead will return to Lake Michigan throughout March and into April. Thus, the summer-run or skamania steelhead provide a year-round fishery.

#### **Sunfish family**

See page 5 under the "Spring Opportunities" section.

#### **FALL**

The fall sport fishery is a direct product of Indiana's (and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-USFWS) stocking program:

#### Skamania and Winter-run Steelhead

Adult steelhead (summer run and winter run) return to the streams where they were stocked as fingerlings.

#### Lake Trout

Lake trout display a spawning pattern close to the Port of Indiana, with a run of lake trout that develops along the shoreline between mid-October and mid-November. The greatest concentration of lake trout occurs at the Port of Indiana, which is close to the major federal stocking site (USFWS).

#### **Chinook and Coho Salmon**

Chinook and coho salmon return to streams and spawn from late August to early November. Chinook and coho salmon die after spawning.

The table on page 10 provides a summary of peak angling periods on Lake Michigan.

For stream anglers, the best time of year to fish the trout and salmon is summarized by the following:

#### **Chinook and Coho salmon:**

September through mid-November

#### Skamania (summer) Steelhead:

Mid-June to mid-October
(Also, various winter months from January-March--dependent upon environmental/stream conditions)

#### Winter Steelhead:

Mid-November to mid-March

Summer-run Skamania steelhead return to streams from July (mid-June) through the winter months and spawn from mid-January to mid/late-February (as late as March); winter-run steelhead return beginning in mid to late October, with the bulk of the return in February and March. Winter-run steelhead spawn from mid-March to mid-April.

All species of salmonids (coho, chinook, steelhead trout, and brown trout) are

available to sport anglers during the fall spawning runs (boat/pier anglers as trout and salmon return to their stocking site; stream anglers when trout and salmon are in the tributaries).

#### SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT FOR TROUT/SALMON FISHING

To fish the trout and salmon, most anglers use a heavy rod with 10-12 pound test line. Medium spoons (cleos/kowobblers), plugs, spinners, and body-baits (rapalas/shadlings) are used for chinook. Smaller spoons and spinners are used for coho. Small spinners or rooster tails work well for steelhead. Nightcrawlers and waxworms are successful at times, especially in summer. Spawn sacks (small clumps of trout or salmon eggs wrapped in mesh bags) are used throughout the year and provide good yearround action. Typical color patterns for trout and salmon include fluorescent orange; chartreuse; red; green/black or any combination of the prior listed colors with silver/chrome.

Anglers report good success with black or brown stonefly patterns, chartreuse flies, green and orange woolyworms, egg sucking leeches, and many others depending upon the time of year and the presentation of the flies to the fish.

### EXOTIC SPECIES AND THEIR IMPACTS

Since the early 1800s, 139 non-indigenous aquatic organisms have become established in the Great Lakes basin (Charlebois 1996). This number includes 59 plants, 25 fishes, 24 algae, 14 mollusks, and 6 crustaceans. Unintentional releases from bait buckets, home aquaria, and ships (ballast water) account for 1/3 of these species introductions. Over half of the exotic/introduced species came

from Eurasia, with many native to the Atlantic Ocean. Many of these exotic species have had negative impacts to the Lake Michigan ecosystem, including but not limited to: sea lamprey, rainbow smelt, alewife, zebra mussels, round goby and spiny water flea.

Successful invaders, such as the prior species, usually have detrimental effects on native species, their habitats and human activities dependent upon water resources. Once exotic species establish themselves, eradication becomes impossible without further damaging the environment. Not all aquatic species introduced to the Great Lakes have been successful invaders. Species that succeed have characteristics that make them successful, including: hardiness, aggressiveness, prolific breeding, rapid dispersal.

Zebra mussels, introduced to the Great Lakes in 1986, is an excellent example of an exotic species harmful potential. The zebra mussel threatens the entire food web by filtering vast amounts of basic food from the ecosystem. In turn, less food is available to sustain the native species that are dependent on the same food resources. Economic and social consequences have also occurred, with raw water intakes for industry and public drinking water being fouled.

What can anglers do? Anglers play an important role in management strategies for preventing the introduction and spread of nonindigenous species. Tips for reducing the spread of non-native species, such as the round goby, includes:

- 1) Dumping bait buckets only in areas where they were filled.
- 2) Anglers should not take unusual species home to put in aquariums (while there may be the temptation to take gobies for a home aquarium or home fish pond; Indiana law prohibits the possession of live gobies and

transportation of gobies or other exotic species across state lines is also illegal).

- 3) Dispose unwanted bait on land.
- 4) Drain water from your boat, livewell and bilge before leaving a water access
- 5) Do not dump live fish from one body of water into another.
- 6) Never dip your bait bucket into a lake or river if it has water in it from another.
- 7) Weeds that have been removed from fishing hooks and left in the boat or weeds tangled in propellers should be removed and left at the lake where they were collected
- 8) Washing/drying your boat and equipment to kill harmful species that were not seen at the boat launch is also helpful (esp. for zebra mussels)-- rinse boat/equip. with hot tap water or spray boat/equip. with high pressure water and dry.
- 9) Learn to identify exotic species information how to identify them is available on the internet, check out Illinois/Indiana Sea Grant web page at: <a href="http://www.iisgcp.org/">http://www.iisgcp.org/</a>.

Release of aquarium pets, catches from other waters or live bait into lake and rivers is considered "biological littering" and pollutes our waters, just like dumping chemicals. *It is illegal to stock any fish without a permit.* 

#### FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY

Indiana's fish consumption advisory is similar to the health advice you hear or read about every day regarding diet, exercise or safety. How you use this information to protect your health and enjoy life is a matter of choice.

The purpose of this advisory is to make sure you have the proper information to make those choices.

One common misunderstanding about the advisory is the difference between no consumption and restricted consumption of fish. The advisory is not a ban on eating fish from lakes and streams as some people believe. The fish consumption advisory will help you make the right choice about how much fish to eat and what type of fish to eat. If you follow the advisory, you will minimize the risk from eating fish and maximize you health benefits by using fish as a valuable source of protein.

You should use the advisory to make informed decisions about where to fish, which fish to eat and how much to eat. The advisory should not discourage you from going fishing or eating the fish you catch. The advisory is a source of information that allows you to enjoy your fishing trip and protect your health at the same time.

A statewide fish tissue monitoring program provides data for Indiana's fish consumption advisory. New tissue data is collected every year from new areas or sites previously sampled to keep health information updated. This long term commitment to human health protection also serves as a constant monitor for changes in the environment.

The Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory is issued by the Indiana State Department of Health. Consult the complete advisory for specific information on the body of water you plan to fish.

For a complete copy of the fish consumption advisory or if you have questions concerning the advisory contact:

Indiana State Department of Health Environmental Epidemiology 2 N. Meridian St., Section 3D Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 (317) 233-7808 or visit the Indiana State Department of Health web site:

 $\underline{www.IN.gov/isdh/dataandstats/fish/fish\_adv\_index.}$   $\underline{htm.}$ 

#### **SPECIAL NOTICE TO ANGLERS**

Recent changes in the law have resulted in this notice to anglers that the Port of Indiana is CLOSED to all recreational watercraft including fishing from a boat. The area is posted. The following is a summary of the Indiana Administrative Code for this law:

### 130 IAC 4-1-11 Fishing; swimming; boat launching

Authority: IC 8-10-1-7; IC 8-10-1-9 Affected: IC 8-10-1

Sec. 11 (a) No person shall fish in the port area between sunset and sunrise. Fishing is allowed only within the designated fishing area that is maintained and is under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources and the commission.

- (b) No person shall launch a boat or fish from a boat in the port area.
- (c) Swimming is prohibited in the port area. (Indiana Port Commission; 130 IAC 4-1-11; filed Jun 6, 2002, 11:22 a.m.: 25 IR 3710)

#### **Literature Cited**

Beeton, A.M. 1984. The world's Great Lakes. J. Great Lakes Res. 10(2): 106-113.

Charlebois, Patrice. 1996. Nonindigenous threats continue. The Helm. 13(1): 5-7.

Eshenroder, R.L., M.E. Holey, T.K. Gorenflo, and R.D. Clark, Jr. 1995. Fish-community objectives for Lake Michigan. Great Lakes Fish. Comm. Spec. Pub. 95-3. 56p.

Fishing Northwest Indiana's Lake Michigan Shoreline and Tributaries

Type of Fish	How to Fish	Best Time of Year	Average Fish Size	
Coho Salmon	pier boat	mid February/ March thru May	2-4 lbs.	
	stream	Sept./Oct.	4 lbs.	
Chinook Salmon	some pier boat May; mid-July thru September		10-20 lbs.	
	stream	Sept./Oct.	10-20 lbs.	
Steelhead (Skamania)	1		10-20 lbs.	
	stream	July-February	10-20 lbs.	
Winter-run Steelhead	pier stream	late October- thru March	8-12 lbs.	
Lake Trout	boat	mid June thru August; mid-Oct. to Nov.	10-20 lbs.	
Yellow Perch	pier boat	July to mid-September	8.0 inches	
Smallmouth and other Sunfish species	pier boat	June to September	10-16 inches 6-8 inches	

All peak angling opportunities listed are dependent upon environmental variables such as temperature, and may vary (due to local weather conditions).

#### \*NOTE\*

Fishing in offshore areas requires standard and various safety equipment such as life jackets, ship-to-shore radio, a properly compensated compass etc. An auxiliary motor and ship-to-shore radio should be included at all times, especially in emergency situations. Never underestimate the potential for sudden weather changes, possibly severe, on Lake Michigan! Please refer to the pamphlet "Indiana Boating Laws" for a complete listing of boating rules (Indiana boating laws can be accessed through a link provided on the Department of Natural Resources Division of Law Enforcement web page at:

<a href="http://www.state.in.us/dnr/lawenfor/index.htm">http://www.state.in.us/dnr/lawenfor/index.htm</a>)

#### **RULES TO REMEMBER**

Lake Michigan is divided into state waters owned by Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana (Michigan DNR <a href="http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/">http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/</a>; Wisconsin DNR <a href="http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/">http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/</a> and Illinois DNR <a href="http://www.dnr.state.il.us/">http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/</a> and Illinois DNR <a href="http://www.dnr.state.il.us/">http://www.dnr.state.il.us/</a>. Each state requires that sport anglers possess the required license and/or stamp (Indiana requires a trout and salmon fishing stamp in addition to a fishing license when targeting trout/salmon on Lake Michigan an/or it's tributaries, <a href="http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild/">http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild/</a> }).

#### **Trout and salmon (Indiana waters):**

A 5-2 daily bag limit for the sport harvest of trout and salmon on Lake Michigan and tributaries (5 fish trout and salmon aggregate bag limit, of which no more than 2 may be lake trout) with a 14" minimum size limit.

You cannot possess more than 5 trout or salmon (Indiana waters of Lake Michigan) while fishing on Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.

You cannot use a trot line (power line), set line or throw line to take fish from Lake Michigan.

#### **Indiana Yellow Perch (Indiana waters):**

The current daily bag limit for the sport harvest of yellow perch on Lake Michigan remains at 15. There is no size limit on yellow perch.

You cannot possess more than 15 yellow perch (Indiana waters of Lake Michigan) while fishing on Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.

#### Black Bass (Black bass includes largemouth and smallmouth; Indiana waters):

Daily bag limit of 3 singly or in aggregate; with a 14" minimum size limit.

Please refer to the 2003 Indiana Fishing Guide for a summary of Indiana fishing regulations (guide can be accessed via links found on the Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife web page at: <a href="http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild/">http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild/</a>). Important regulations include various tributary closings and restrictions along with hook restrictions.

(The fishing guide is designed as a service to anglers and is not intended to be a complete digest of all fishing regulations. Most regulations are subject to change by administrative rule. For a listing of administrative rules, visit:

http://www.state.in.us/legislative/iac/title312.html)

<sup>\*</sup>Single hooks, including those on artificial baits, cannot exceed ½ inch from point to shank.

<sup>\*</sup>Double and treble hooks on artificial baits cannot exceed 3/8 inch from point to shank.

<sup>\*</sup>Any fish taken from Indiana waters must be hooked in the mouth. Foul-hooked fish must be returned to the water.

<sup>\*</sup>Snagging is strictly prohibited.

Fishing Northwest Indiana's Lake Michigan Shoreline and Tributaries

#### **Indiana Lake Michigan Fishing Hotlines**

Lake Michigan Fishing Hotline (219) 874-0009

(Updated weekly March thru December)

St. Joseph River Hotline (574) 257-TIPS

(Updated weekly, mid-Feb. to April; mid-June to mid-Dec.)

The St. Joseph River access guide available by request from the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Station office. The St. Joseph River, also a tributary of Lake Michigan, is managed by the District 2 Fisheries Biologist, Neil Ledet, (260) 829-6241.

Internet Fishing Report for Lake Michigan and the St. Joseph River can be found on the Division of Fish and Wildlife's

web site: <a href="http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild">http://www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild</a>

#### **Indiana Lake Michigan Hatcheries**

Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery (Lake Michigan) (219) 369-9591

Bodine State Fish Hatchery (St. Joseph River) (574) 255-4199

#### **Indiana Division of Law Enforcement**

District 10 Headquarters (219) 879-5710

(Lake/Porter/LaPorte Counties)

North Region Headquarters (765) 473-9722

Turn-in Poachers/Polluters Hotline (TIP) 1-800-TIP-IDNR (847-4367)

Tips may also be left on the law enforcement

web site (http://www.state.in.us/dnr/lawenfor/index.htm )

#### **Additional Numbers/Web-sites of Interest:**

LaPorte County Visitor Bureau
(219) 872-0031 or 1-800-634-2650
(219) 926-2255 or 1-800-283-8687
http://www.harborcountry-in.org/
http://www.info@casualcoast.com/

Lake County Visitor Bureau Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore 1-800-255-5253 (219) 926-7561, ext. 225 or

http://www.alllake.org/ 1-800-727-5847

http://www.nps.gov/indu/

Indiana Dunes State Park (219) 926-1952

http://www.state.in.us/dnr/parklake/

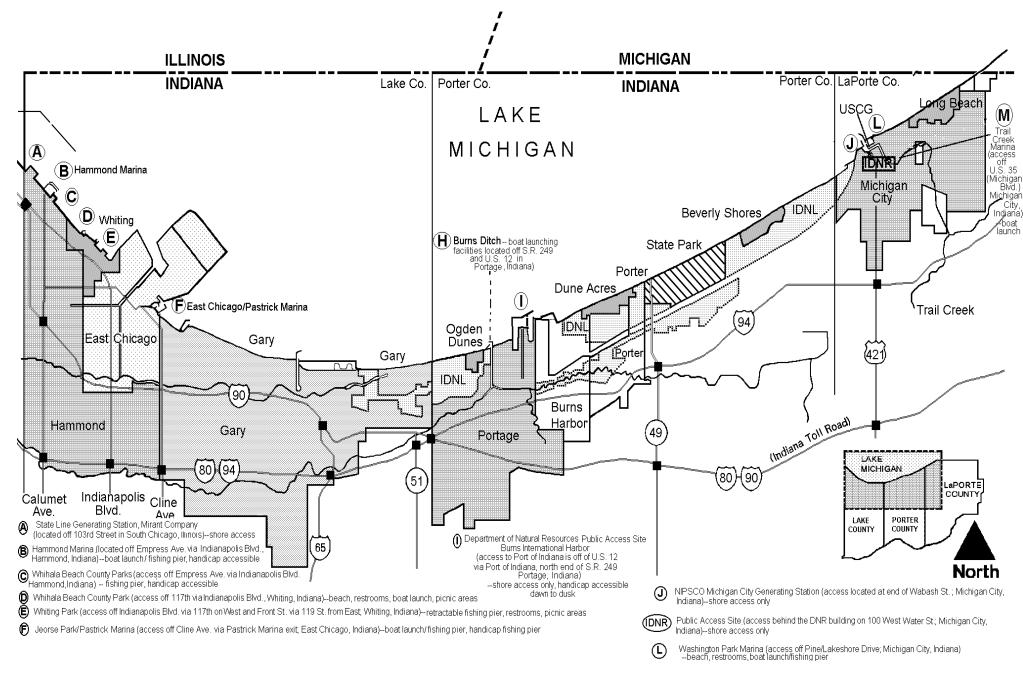
Great Lakes Fisheries Commission

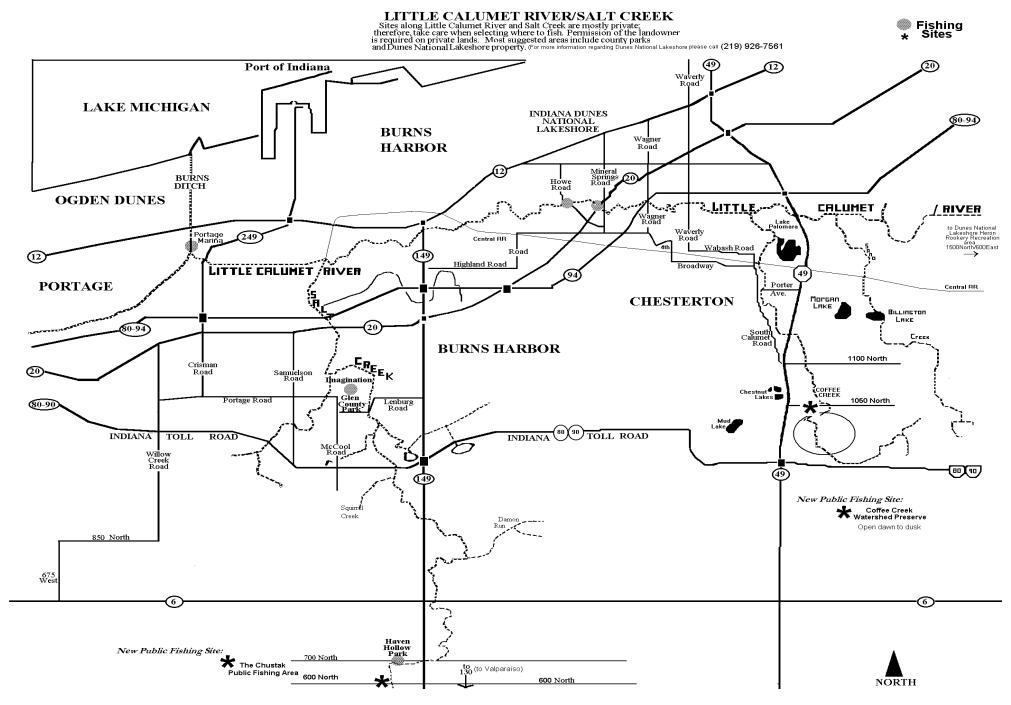
http://www.glfc.org/

Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council <a href="http://www.great-lakes.org/">http://www.great-lakes.org/</a>

## TROUT AND SALMON STOCKING RECORDS Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife

Lake Michigan				St. Joseph River			
Year	Chinook	Coho	Steelhead	Brown Trout	Chinook	Coho	Steelhead
'82	313,071	160,381	164,111	0	0	0	0
<b>'83</b>	238,383	127,555	283,499	0	0	0	0
'84	405,912	156,304	353,667	0	523,023	0	0
<b>'</b> 85	354,740	139,018	282,763	0	407,013	0	226,604
'86	341,726	132,854	346,236	0	355,939	0	259,925
'87	310,745	161,787	286,275	0	258,474	0	224,881
<b>'88</b>	502,311	160,374	243,184	0	377,528	0	226,145
'89	530,561	40,720	289,429	0	186,858	0	214,068
<b>'</b> 90	476,646	114,153	317,346	0	153,590	0	221,422
<b>'</b> 91	546,084	99,980	271,608	0	148,267	0	221,598
<b>'</b> 92	330,453	130,518	315,332	0	173,778	0	230,253
<b>'</b> 93	292,464	12,316	295,837	0	166,142	0	180,512
<b>'</b> 94	368,026	84,397	378,522	0	168,938	0	172,975
<b>'</b> 95	364,182	165,809	301,052	0	190,819	0	188,842
<b>'</b> 96	362,162	266,549	312,776	0	209,407	75,980	254,135
<b>'</b> 97	279,297	80,817	340,010	0	143,262	0	287,174
<b>'</b> 98	386,525	148,320	183,715	0	206,987	0	299,869
<b>'</b> 99	264,608	146,882	319,082	0	150,811	0	252,491
<b>,</b> 00	267,865	157,208	174,136	0	149,911	0	220,439
<b>'</b> 01	297,195	157,048	297,971	0	153,520	0	293,475
'02	253,000	224,797	298,884	35,000	0	0	306,297
Totals	7,485,956	2,867,787	6,055,435	35,000	4,124,267	75,980	4,281,105





Page 15 of 16

